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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ADDIS ABABA 001771

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)  
SUBJECT: SOMALI PRIME MINISTER GHEDI DISCUSSES  
POWER-SHARING AND RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE PLANS

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 1608  
[1](#)B. 06 ADDIS ABABA 3212

Classified By: ERIC WONG, ACTING POL-ECON COUNSELOR. REASON: 1.4 (D).

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY. On May 31, Somali Prime Minister Ghedi affirmed the Transitional Federal Government's (TFG) commitment to power-sharing with all clans, but noted that the Hawiye Leadership Committee represented neither the general interests of the Hawiye community nor traditional Somali leadership. Ghedi dismissed "rumors" that the National Reconciliation Conference (NRC) would be postponed beyond June 14 and said 1,325 delegates (including 200 from the diaspora) would participate, appointed by traditional Somali elders in accordance with the "4.5" clan-based formula. Former Council of Islamic Courts supporters could participate, so long as they recognized the TFG, renounced violence, and were appointed by their respective clan elders. Former MPs remaining in Asmara had exhausted opportunities to return to Somalia, and had been replaced by their clans. The Conference would aim at "social" rather than political reconciliation. Ghedi criticized Italy for seeking to organize a conference of Somali women in Rome on June 13, without the TFG's consent, which could interfere with the NRC. Ghedi and Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) Speaker Sheikh Adan Mohammed Nur said the TFP had rejected proposals to allow TFG ministers to be selected from outside parliament, as doing so would violate the Transitional Federal Charter. Looking beyond the Conference, Ghedi anticipated the adoption by referendum of a new constitution (currently being drafted), followed by a census and ultimately national elections. On other issues, Speaker Nur echoed appreciation for Ethiopian cooperation with Somalia against regional terrorism (ref A). Ghedi reaffirmed the TFG's commitment to facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, despite concerns about expired food aid and UN staff accustomed to operating in the absence of any Somali government. Both Ghedi and Nur criticized alleged bias by the BBC Somali Service and appealed for financial assistance to allow the TFG to counter misinformation. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) On May 31, Ambassador hosted a luncheon for TFG Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Ghedi and his wife Fadouma Hassan Ali, TFG Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Farahan Ali Mohamoud, TFP Speaker Sheikh Adan Mohammed Nur, and Political and Reconciliation Advisor to the

Speaker Mohammed Rashid Haji. TFG Ambassador to Ethiopia and PermRep to the African Union Ambassador Abdulkarim Farah and four parliamentarians accompanied the TFG delegation: Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Information, Culture, Guidance and Heritage, Awad Ahmed Ashareh; Sheik Djani Hadj Hussein; Mohammed Huseein Issac; and Mohammed Hassan Faqi. UK, France, and Italian ambassadors also attended, as did German DCM.

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DONORS/PARTNERS PRESS FOR INCLUSIVITY  
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13. (SBU) UK Ambassador observed that inclusivity, especially political engagement of the Hawiye clan, was key to the success of the upcoming National Reconciliation Conference (NRC) in Mogadishu; the NRC was an opportunity to show that all clans had a role in the reconciliation process. The UK supported efforts to build a "de facto" government. Ambassador Yamamoto reiterated the importance of immediate power-sharing with all clans and groups, especially Hawiye sub-clans, and noted that this had been raised with TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf. German DCM (holding EC presidency) remarked that the TFG had made significant achievements since January 2007, moving Somalia from anarchy, and that with only a few exceptions, most clans and sub-clans had supported the TFG for several months. He said he hoped the NRC would help Somalia achieve sustainable political stability; one could not expect "instant democracy." Citing the numerous assassination attempts against Ghedi, French Ambassador hailed PM Ghedi's personal courage, and echoed points on the need for inclusivity.

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TFG COMMITTED TO POWER-SHARING  
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14. (SBU) PM Ghedi said that both the TFG and the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) were committed to power-sharing with the Hawiye and others. Minister of State Farahan Ali Mohamoud hailed from the Hawiye/Duduble sub-clan, he added. "Every Somali clan has its share," Ghedi said, in accordance with the "4.5" clan-based formula. Hawiye were included in the TFG, Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP), and the National Governance and Reconciliation Commission (NGRC). Ghedi said that in addition to meeting with the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr sub-clan, he and TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf had met with the "so-called Hawiye Leadership Committee" in Mogadishu nearly two dozen times. Ghedi asserted that the Committee did not represent the entire Hawiye community, but only three Hawiye sub-clans (Habr-Gedir/Ayr, Habr-Gedir/Suleiman, and the Duduble), some of whom were linked with the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) and terrorists. Furthermore, the Hawiye Leadership Committee represented neither Somalia's political leadership (consisting of representatives of all clans serving in parliament) nor Somali traditional leadership (clan elders or leaders, such as imams, ougazes, or sultans), both of which were committed to "pacification" of Somalia and peaceful development.

15. (SBU) Asked by UK Ambassador whether the TFG would consider allowing non-MPs to serve as government ministers, in order to increase inclusivity, Ghedi said he had twice asked Parliament to allow the Prime Minister to appoint ministers who were not MPs, but the proposal had been twice rejected. In the future, he hoped to convince MPs to allow qualified professionals outside Parliament to join the government. Speaker Nur (speaking through translation via Chairman Ashareh) observed that the Transitional Federal Charter (which had resulted from national reconciliation talks in Nairobi, rather than being drafted by current MPs) specified that ministers had to be MPs. Revision of the Charter would require a two-thirds majority, or 184 votes,

Nur said.

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RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE AIMS AT "SOCIAL RECONCILIATION"  
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¶6. (SBU) PM Ghedi dismissed "rumors" that the NRC would be postponed beyond June 14, and said he expected that delegates selected by traditional clan structures would begin traveling to Mogadishu within the next week. He appealed for financial assistance to cover travel expenses of diaspora attending from Europe and the United States. Ghedi attributed the NRC's earlier postponement to partners' delays in providing financial support, noting that the EC had pledged USD 7.5 million but that "nothing concrete" had been received. Financial constraints had reduced the number of conference participants from the original 3,000. The Somali people, TFG, and parliament were committed to the conference, and to "pacifying Mogadishu" in order to convene the NRC, he said. Ghedi welcomed plans by Italy and Sweden to convene a donors conference in Rome, noting that a year ago the TFG and donors had conducted a joint assessment of Somalia's reconstruction needs. Ambassador noted the significant USG contribution to Somalia, following Congressional approval of supplemental funding.

¶7. (SBU) According to Ghedi, participation in the NRC would be in accordance with the "4.5" clan-based formula, with a total of 1,325 delegates: 250 for each of 4 major clans, 125 for minor clans, and the remaining 200 set aside for Somalis from the diaspora, as "fresh perspectives" were needed. Diaspora would be welcome to attend if appointed by traditional Somali clan structures, and the 200 diaspora seats would also be subject to the "4.5" formula. Asked whether the agenda and outcomes for the NRC had been announced yet publicly, Ghedi responded that a "rough agenda," as well as selection of participants and determination of outcomes, was in the hands of the National

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Governance and Reconciliation Committee (NGRC) led by Ali Mahdi Mohamed, "not in the hands of government." He noted that Ali Mahdi had just returned to Nairobi, after visiting Rwanda at the invitation of Rwanda's government, to examine Rwanda's national reconciliation experience (following the 1994 genocide). Ghedi added that he had addressed parliament in order dispel MPs concerns about the NGRC.

¶8. (SBU) Responding to the criticism that the NRC would be a social rather than a political congress, Ghedi noted that political faction leaders and civil society representatives had attended the 2.5-year-long reconciliation conference in Mbagathi, Kenya, which had, with the international community's support, agreed on a Transitional Charter, elected a parliamentary speaker and MPs endorsed by traditional elders, and formed the TFG. However, UN reports had highlighted the lack of social reconciliation, which he said was needed to conclude the process of reconciliation. The NRC aimed at restoring confiscated properties to their original owners, Ghedi said. In addition to outcomes under discussion to be implemented at the district and regional levels, other outcomes included having a constitutional commission continue drafting a new constitution; holding a constitutional referendum; conducting a census; and then holding elections--goals for which the TFG needed international support. Pressed by French Ambassador on whether the TFG's focus on social reconciliation was a means of avoiding political power-sharing, Ghedi dismissed critics as those who had been left out of the earlier Nairobi process. The TFG welcomed constructive criticism; critics must propose solutions, Ghedi said. Despite "strong propaganda" against the TFG and the reconciliation process, consultations with all clans and sub-clans had led to them supporting the NRC; Ghedi said he was "confident" of a successful outcome.

¶9. (SBU) Asked about security in Mogadishu, Ghedi said some 1,500 police had been trained under local administration, and that security for Mogadishu's 16 districts had been delegated to district-level authorities. Ghedi invited foreign governments to reopen embassies in Mogadishu, noting that the site of the former U.S. Embassy was still available for the United States.

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NO RECOGNITION OF FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS  
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¶10. (SBU) Ghedi said former Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) supporters could participate in the NRC so long as they fulfilled three criteria: (1) recognition of the TFG; (2) renunciation of violence; and (3) appointment by traditional clan structures/elders. While the Conference did not seek to exclude anyone, it did not want to "deal with terrorists." Asked about former TFG parliamentarians self-exiled in Asmara, Ghedi said that as the former MPs had fought against their own government and parliament, they had been replaced in accordance with Somali law by new appointees named by their appropriate sub-clans. Such former MPs could participate in the peace process as private Somali citizens, but not as members of parliament. French Ambassador noted that Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles had commented that what was legal did not necessarily equate to what was politically expedient.

¶11. (SBU) TFP Speaker Sheikh Adan Mohammed Nur explained that in accordance with the Transitional Federal Charter and standing by-laws of parliament, MPs absent without justification were subject to automatic dismissal. Nevertheless, MPs absconding to Asmara had been given an extra 45 days to return: 12 had, while another 25 had not. Absentee MPs had relinquished their positions through their own actions, not through dismissal, Nur said, and could only return as MPs if nominated by their respective traditional clan structures or elders. Nur noted that former Deputy Prime Minister Hussein Aideed, who had joined CIC critics of the TFG in Asmara, had not been among those given another 45 days to return to Somalia, and he had "abandoned" his work since January 1. In consultation with PM Ghedi, the TFP was

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in the process of reviewing Hussein Aideed's status, Nur said.

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ITALY CONDEMNED FOR SEEKING TO ORGANIZE COMPETING CONFERENCE  
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¶12. (SBU) PM Ghedi sharply criticized Italy for seeking to organize a June 13 conference in Rome of 100 Somali women, most of whom appeared to oppose the TFG, and expressed concern that it would interfere with the June 14 Somali-led National Reconciliation Conference in Mogadishu. "Any initiative that is not helping us, is hurting us," Ghedi said, adding that Italy should instead encourage the Somali women to attend the NRC. Ghedi said the TFG Cabinet had unanimously decided on May 30 to denounce the Italian initiative. "Today, Somalia is on fire; those not putting water on the fire with us, are not with us. Some are putting petrol on the fire," Ghedi remarked. Italian ambassador responded that dialogue, not specific dates, were key; Italy had set the June 13 date prior to the announcement of the June 14 NRC. Ghedi countered that the Italy had failed to consult the TFG: "without the consent of the government, it's not helping." Ghedi protested that the TFG was "a legitimate government," and questioned whether the TFG "would be allowed to organize a meeting of Italian stakeholders without the Italian government's consent."

¶13. (SBU) Ghedi also complained about the EC and Italian delegations in Nairobi, stating that whereas capitals of allies were "properly working with us," this was not the case

with "field offices." Italian Ambassador responded that this issue had not been raised during a meeting the previous week between Deputy Foreign Minister Patrizia Sentinelli and TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf. Mario Raffaelli was Italy's representative for Somalia, and Nairobi had the lead; there was no difference between Rome and Nairobi, Italian Ambassador added.

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TFP PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKER HAILS ETHIOPIAN ASSISTANCE  
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¶14. (SBU) Speaker Nur questioned why Somali government visits to Addis Ababa generated attention, while visit to Nairobi did not, as Somalia shared boundaries and had cordial relations with both Ethiopia and Kenya. Somalia's only "outlets to the outside world" were Nairobi and Addis Ababa. In addition to trade, Ethiopia had shared "blood" with Somalia: Somalis were "indebted for their brotherly assistance," as Ethiopian forces had taken the historic step of helping avert a "terrorist invasion of Somalia." Citing the recent grenade attack in Jijiga, Ethiopia, that wounded the president of Ethiopia's Somali Regional State, Nur said Somalia was bound to cooperate with Ethiopia against the threat of international terrorists harbored by Eritrea. Such a threat endangered not only Ethiopia or Somalia, but the entire Horn of Africa, Nur said. In concert with its neighbors, Somalia hoped to begin a new chapter of promoting peace, Nur added.

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SUPPORT FOR HUMANITARIAN AID; CONCERN ABOUT EXPIRED FOOD  
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¶15. (SBU) In response to UK and French Ambassadors' remarks on the importance of allowing humanitarian access, PM Ghedi affirmed that the TFG was committed to supporting "those who are supporting our people," and that humanitarian aid delivery (i.e., of food, water, and medicine) was crucial. The TFG had established an interministerial committee that had met with humanitarian agencies to clarify that Mogadishu's airport and seaport had never been closed to them, Ghedi said. The issue had also been discussed with UN U/SYG for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes. Ghedi explained that for 15 years, UN agencies and humanitarian NGOs had become accustomed to operating in the absence of any Somali government. However, there was now a Somali government. Ghedi said he had raised with Holmes the concern that some UN

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staff had served in Somalia for as long as 8-14 consecutive years, despite UN regulations that allowed only a five-year maximum.

¶16. (SBU) Also of concern was expired foodstuffs provided by humanitarian agencies: UN regulations allowed only 90 days of warehouse storage, but some items had been stored for nearly a year, Ghedi said. Speaker Nur said that while the TFG sought good relations with the World Food Program (WFP), some humanitarian NGOs had brought spoiled, expired food to Somalia.

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MISINFORMATION FROM BBC SOMALI SERVICE  
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¶17. (SBU) Figures relating to the number of IDPs being registered had been exaggerated, Ghedi added, attributing misinformation to the BBC Somali Service, the last "remaining warlord," headed by a Somali citizen affiliated with the CIC. Speaker Nur said the TFG lacked the resources to combat misinformation from the BBC Somali Service and Al-Jazeera, which had become "a platform for the Islamic Courts." In reality, Nur said, the TFG sought to foster relations between Islam and the West through "good works" in Somalia and Afghanistan.

¶18. (C) COMMENT. Comments by European ambassadors generally underscore shared concerns about the need for inclusivity and power-sharing by the TFG, in order to ensure the success of the upcoming National Reconciliation Conference. Prime Minister Ghedi's observation that the Conference aims at "social" rather than political reconciliation, along with Speaker Nur's declaration that absentee MPs have been replaced in accordance with the Transitional Federal Charter, suggest that it is unlikely that the Conference will result in major structural changes to the TFG. Ghedi's accusation that Italy seeks to interfere with the June 14 NRC, by holding its own conference in Rome, highlights the TFG's concerns about the motives of Somalia's former colonial power. END COMMENT.  
YAMAMOTO